GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
OCEAN DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:675
ANSWERED ON:29.02.2000
PHALGUNA SAKA MARINE PRODUCTS
VIJAY GOEL

Will the Minister of OCEAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the kind of marine products being used for life-saving drugs against AIDS, hepatitis- B, Cancer etc.;

(b) whether any research unit has been established by the Government for furtherance of research activities for extracting marine products from the sea/ocean for drug production; and

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith the objectives?

Answer

MINISTER FOR OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI)

a) Presently there are no marine products used as drugs for treatment of AIDS andHepatitis- B. However, a large number of metabolites isolated from marine organisms are reported to have been tested for cytotoxic property against one or more tumor cell lines. Only a few have been tested against a panel of cell lines. It is yet to be confirmed as to whether those reported to be active against one type of cell line will also be active against others. Some of these drugs are on trial and yet to reach the clinical stage.
b) & c) A multi-institutional national project on `Drugs from Sea` is being implemented from 1990-91 onwards, involving 10 leading research Laboratories in the country with Central Drug Research Institute, Lucknow as the nodal agency.The main objectives of the project are:
a) Collection of marine organisms and maintenance of the repository of different marine species.
b) Biological screening of marine extracts for various pharmacological and toxicological trials.
c) Isolation and characterisation of active constituents from the active fractions, and
d) Drug development.

Under this project so far 800 marine organisms have been screened for bio-evaluation, of which 6 organisms possessing potent activity as anti-diorrhoeal-cum-anti-diabetic, anti-lipidaemic, anti-anxiety, anti-inflammatory and larvicidal, have been identified for further studies. Pharmacological, toxicological and Phase -I clinicaltrials on anti-diorrhoeal-cum-anti-diabetic and anti -lipidaemic leads are in progress.